

EUROPEAN TRASH 6 CINEMA

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DEMONIA (aka EROTIC RITES OF THE LIVING DEAD) (1979)
DIRECTED BY JOE D'AMATO REVIEWED BY STEVE BOGDANY

This tape is in French, with no subtitles, so I'm in a fog as to the plot, if there is one. It stars Laura Gemser (Yes, her again. How many obscure films has this woman been in?) and it's a zombie film. The story, told in flashback, involves some voodoo rites, a voodoo charm, and an island where the living dead pop out of the ground at night.



Since I can't give a synopsis, I'll list some of the good parts. There are a couple of very graphic zombie attacks near the beginning of the film, with nice maggot-infested corpses and close-ups of blood gushing fetal sounds, which gave me great hopes for the remainder of the movie. There's a sort of demonic black cat that pops up out of nowhere and propels itself at some poor buggers' neck. A guy and a girl are screaming in the surf at night, while a horde of zombies gather silently on the beach, watching. When they notice the guy is wearing the aforementioned charm, they slowly depart. There are a number of atmospheric shots of corpses rising from the ground, all shrouded (aves on make-up), and then eating people (if the zombies are lucky) or getting their heads bashed off (if they're not). There are some simulated sex scenes to help get through the slow segments, but the thin sun-baked women weren't my idea of "erotic", as the title implies.

Now I said I had great hopes for this film from the beginning, and it sounds pretty decent so far, right? Unfortunately, nearly all the zombie scenes take place at night, and are so very dark that it's difficult to see what is happening. It looks like the production crew forgot to bring lights with them. This drastically cuts down on the effectiveness of these segments and even makes me wonder how the film got released.

DEMONIA does have some good graphic violence and some nice atmosphere, but if you're thinking of obtaining this tape, be aware of the illumination problems. Running time is 79 minutes.

The Spaniards In Scream Cinema

While people rave about the likes of Dario Argento from Italy, Tobe Hooper from The United States, and David Cronenberg from Canada, the Spaniards have long been creative in the art of horror film as well, but for some reason, unjustly ignored. Enclosed in this article is a brief profile on some of the leading horror people in the land of bullfights, flamenco, and strong wine. Many are recognizable to Non-European fans by face, but not by name. In this article, long overdue recognition will be given to some of the leading stars of Spanish horror.

Amando De Ossorio:

Now in his early 70's, the aging but active director announced plans to resume to making horror films in 1989, first with a zombie picture, then the filming of *Play Me The Song Of Death*. Past credits include the famous "Templar" series, about blind zombies haunting Portugal. In no less than 4 films, these untanny creatures haunted the screen, climaxing in *The Night Of The Sengullia*. Another upcoming project by De Ossorio is the novelization of these films, into book form. Other past horror credits by De Ossorio include *Night Of The Sorcerers*, *The Lorelei's Grasp*, and *Dracula's Mecca*. He has made many other films outside the horror realm as well. He presently lives in Madrid.

Jaquinto Molina:

This man also starred in most of his films, under the alias of Paul Nashy. Mainly known for low budget gore, his past projects include *Letitor De Panico*, *La Bestia Y La Espada Magica*, *Carnival De Las Bestias*, and others, all translated into English and released under a multitude of titles. Molina likewise starred in, but did not direct the *Witch* project, *Exorcism*. Some of Molina's projects have been good, others awful, but few directors so typify the Spanish horror cinema as much as him. He still still alive, well, and living in Madrid.

Mari Paz Ponsal:

The star of *El Extrano Amor De Los Vampiros*, Mari Paz Ponsal was used in various female vampire roles in answer to the Hammer films being turned out in England at the same time, which captivated the image of sensual, beautiful female vampires, rather than the hideously ugly *Wolferatu* types of decades passed. In the past few years she has tapered off considerably and is evidently trying to steer clear of the horror roles which won her fame. She lives in Madrid, a small town outside Madrid, in relative seclusion.

Silvia Tortosa:

Introduced to the English speaking world in the company of Peter Cushing, Telly Savalas, and Christopher Lee, in *The Horror Express*, Tortosa remains one of the most popular actresses in Spanish cinema today, in not only horror, but a number of other genre pictures as well. In her earlier days, she was used by Amando De Ossorio in some of his horror films, and remains quite active. Age has not mellowed or ruined her looks either. She is married and lives in Madrid, where she is represented by the powerful Marie Jope Poblador agency.

Fernando Rey:

Introduced to English speaking fans as the international drug dealer in *The French Connection* III, Fernando Rey has long been casted as a murderous villain, brudist, or psychopath. He has played in virtually every type of film known, from horror to westerns, to drama. This

but sadly, no few people seem to know his name. A few years back, he did a complete turnabout, satirizing his typical villain role in the comedy, *Eastlars Chapuady*.

Barbara Rey:

A long-standing favorite of Amando De Ossorio, she had at least some part in most of his pictures. She starred in the *Templar* series aforementioned and in *Night Of The Sorcerers*, plus turned out a variety of credits for other directors. Not much was heard of her, likewise, in recent years, although in 1987 she made the headlines in some of the Spanish magazines, but not for acting. Evidently she held off and chased away a burglar who was attacking her husband, waving a pistol in the intruder's face like a modern day Annie Oakley.

Simon Andreu:

Another actor with a familiar, sinister face, Andreu was the male lead in *Night Of The Sorcerers*, and has played in other films as well, dealing with ghosts, witches, and murderers, a long shot from his earlier roles as a romantic lead in romances, including a dreadful role if I remember correctly about a love affair and unexpected pregnancy. He is better suited for horror and proved it firsthand. Should be given more roles as a villain, as this is what he is better suited for. Presently makes his home in Madrid and is very active.

Jorge Grau:

Another director living in Madrid, Grau is famous for one standout, *Bloodsplattered Horror* above all others, *No Profanara El Suono De Los Muertos*, or in English, *Don't Disturb The Sleep Of The Dead*, a film that featured bloodsplattered killings, grotesque murders, psychotic rampage, and in all, served as a forerunner to gore-mongers who copied his style in films such as *Pièces*, *Venganza De La Muerte*, and *Inquisition*. Grau, better known as a director of more serious themes, proved himself capable of creating first class horror here.

Pilar Ordóñez:

A newer face on the Spanish scene, this Madrid resident has proven herself in video, dance, music, stage, and cinema and according to most accounts, may become the new cinema queen of Spain in the near future, replacing the likes of *Espérance Roy*, *Silvia Tortosa*, and *Teri Paz Fomdel*. She has signed for a number of new projects in 1989 and to evaluate her further, we will have to wait until they transpire. She is, however, a name and face to be on the lookout for.

Rugensio Martin:

Formerly a director of genre westerns, Martin switched to horror when the scene trend was in. Classic projects include *A Candle For The Devil*, with *Espérance Roy*, *Victor Alcazar*, and *Aurora Bautista* in lead roles, and *Aguella Casa En Las Afueras*, a witchcraft picture starring *Salva Aguilera*, *Alida Villi*, and *Carmen Maure*. Like *Argento* in Italy, women do not get treated well in the films he turns out and usually end up bloodsplattered victims for some psycho or monster. Martin is still alive and living in Spain. He remains active as a director.

Carmen Sevilla:

A lesser known actress who stood out in *La Cruz Del Diablo* (*The Cross Of The Devil*), a satanic flick of worth. Nothing has been heard of this actress in quite a while. Who knows what has happened. The devil got her, perhaps?

Jesus Franco:

Another director of horror, including *La Tumba De Los Muertos Vivientes* (The Tomb Of The Living Dead), a zombie flick starring Eduardo Fajardo (better known for his role as the sadistic Captain Jackson, Franco Nero's nemesis in *Django*), which was one of his earlier films. While special effects tended to leave a lot to be desired at times, his concepts and style proved interesting. Franco followed this up with some other good films and went on to become well known in Europe for his contributions to horror. He also directed *El Siniestro Dr. Orloff* (The Sinister Dr. Orloff) which was not really up to par.

Juan Manuel:

The Spanish director now reportedly lives in the United States, I have heard, while others have said he is dead. Any readers know? In any case, among his many films includes the female vampire flick *Lemon-Lady Vampire*, which was known more for the powerful soundtrack by Ennio Morricone, than for acting and plot. For a long time, he was one of the most highly regarded of Spanish filmmakers and had put together a massive fan following for himself, almost as large and feverish as those who follow Argento, Hooper, Carpenter, and so on. Sometimes confused with Juan Bosch, another director and different person entirely, who also made horror films, including *Exorcismo*.

Helga Line:

Another aging but still active horror star who played in a multitude of Spanish horror and became a counterpart to such familiar scream queens as Barbara Steele and Veronica Carlson in England. She, like Mari Paz Ponsol, was a Spanish answer to British horror. Among her most interesting credits would be *The Sexual Wiles Of Satan*, which was directed by Jose Usson Larraz and featured Line in the main role, alongside Mauro Rivera and Vanessa Hidalgo. Though considered sinister and kinky at the time, the film would be considered tame by modern standards. She lives in Spain and is still active in film.

Other people not mentioned here but worth keeping an eye on for future projects or worth keeping an eye out for concerning past projects include Marcia Shariff, Clara Radiola, Tito Garcia, Rosa Gavin, Maria Gallardo, Chris Egerta, Helena Fernan Gomez, Gabriel Fariza, Lorena Tovar, Montse Bayo, Susana Sentis, Silvia Aguilar, Alejandro Gastedo, and Jose Vivo, capable actors and actresses all, who have not received their just dues as far as recognition is concerned. Other fine directors include Carmen Lujan, Silvio Balbuena, Juan Piquer Simon, Sebastian Arto, Josefina Molina Weig, and Carlos Reyino Farra.

Dale Pierce

Courtesy of Richard Green and Dennis Capleik, here are some answers to last issue's questions on which video labels certain films in my videography appeared. PUMA MAN-Parade Video, NR. SUPER INVISIBLE-Simitar, and HOUSE OF HORRORISH-Gorgon Video. Thanks guys.

NAKED!SCREAMING!TERROR! #1-The latest publication from the Tim Paxton megallithic publishing empire, the first issue contains a long interview with Frank Henenlotter, along with a ton of reviews. \$2.00 for 24 pages from NPO 67, OBERLIN, OH 44074-0067.

CINE ZINE ZONE #18- Here's a zine totally in french and yet I highly recommend it to fans of Euro-sleaze. This issue runs 72 pages and features an interview with Paolo Bonchi, a filmography on Bonchi and also on Long Jaffria. The ad mats alone are worth the price. Send 35 French francs to Pierre Chariss, 16, Avenue Emile Zola, 94 100 SAINT MAUR FRANCE.

ROSSO-THE WORLD OF ITALIAN HORROR #3-With a title like that you know I had to like it. It's a bit rough on the layout side (Then I should talk!), but editor Derek Brodie fills out the 12 pages with interesting articles and reviews. INFERNO, GRAVE YARD DISTURBANCE, STAGEFRIGHT, 4 FLIES ON GREY VELVET, OPERA, ZOMBIE and a letters page rounds out the issue. 30 WELLBANK, LINTHUR ROAD, PRESTWICH, MANCHESTER M25 8PX, ENGLAND.

SAMHAIN #17- Beginning its 3rd year, SAMHAIN continues to crank out bi-monthly gems like this one. Wonderful color covers and a recent upgrade on the interior layouts, make for a professional package in every regard. Coverage includes THE ABYSS, HALLOWEEN 4, interviews with NINOS HAUSER, RAY MARTEHAUSEN and MARTIN DONOVAN, and reviews of PET SEMETARY, MY RIPPER, THE CHAIR and APT ZERO plus lots more. 5 issues for \$20 from John Gullidge, 19 ELN GROVE ROAD, TOPSHAM, ELETER, DEVON, EX3 0BQ, ENGLAND

ABSURD #9- Ian has had health problems but the long awaited 9th issue is now out and as all previous issues, it's HIGHLY recommended! Current issue includes a long article/filmography on Lon Chaney JR., Part one of Ian's epic article on Italian Musclemen films (this one's on URSUS), MURDO DEL HORROR, a Sante filmography, an update on Jesus Franco which he covered in depth last issue, plus more in this 40 page ballbuster. As usual, this issue is crammed with rare ad mats from all over. \$4.00 from Ian Caunce, 12 UNION ROAD, HURSTHEAD, ROCHEDALE, LANCs, OL12 9QA.

IMAGINATOR #3-Just in and with this issue, Ken upgrades to slick paper. However the arting is what makes this 36 page zine a joy to receive. Over 40 films are reviewed in their mammoth Radioactive Reviews section. Also part 3 of Ken's CASTRATION IN THE MOVIES article, plus interviews with Sybil Danning and oriental action star Joyce Godenzi and more. \$4.00 FROM KEN HILLER, UNIT 1, HANK HOUSE, PERRISBURG PARK, GORE ROAD, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, U.K.

OVERALL - This is a dream come true for us Euro-Horror lovers! Right off it gets 4 Stars, no questions asked. Editor Stephen Throser (and contributor Mark Ashworth) should be showered with money for their efforts. A color cover, slick paper and goodies such as an interview with Michele Soavi, LA NOTTE NERA by Ramsey Campbell, TWO FILMS BY Pupi Avati (ZEUS & LA CASA DALLA FINESTRE CHE RIMANO-the latter being one of the scariest horror films I have ever seen!), reviews of SS HELL CAMP, CHAOS PERVERS (by Stefan Snock & PRESS Jawszyna), THE BELL OF NELL, THE EROTIC RITES OF FRANKENSTEIN, THE CRIMES OF THE BLACK CAT, THE CESTAPO'S LAST ONYX, 5 DOLLS FOR AN AUGUST MOON, LUCKER, A LIZARD IN A WOMAN'S SKIN, MACABRE, THE NIGHT EVELYN CAME OUT OF THE GRAVE and a comparison of LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT vs NIGHT TRAIN SUICIDES. Whew, if you have ever ordered something I've recommended before (and even if you haven't), now is the time to act. The first issue may be sold out so get in on the second issue while you can. Write to STEPHEN THROSER, 14, NINTYER COURT, WEM PARK ROAD, BELTTON HILL, LONDON SW2 4DY, ENGLAND. Get off your dead ass now and contact Stephen. This is what we need more of.

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TEROR CREATURES FROM THE GRAVE (1966) SINISTRE CINEMA
DIRECTED BY RALPH LUCKER (MASSIMO PUPILLO)
REVIEWED BY CONRAD WIDENEN

Long before Lucio Fulci and company were turning out living dead get munchers, the director of the laughably sick BLOODY PIT OF HORROR made this subdued zombie epic. Lawyer Alfred Kovacs (Walter Bredt) arrives in a small European village after being summoned by one Dr. Jacobus Hauff. Met by Dr. Hauff's wife Cleo (ravishing Barbara Steele) and daughter Corinne (Marilyn Mitchell) the lawyer discovers that the doctor has been dead for a year. Turns out the doctor was a bucket of scum who dabbled in the occult. Alfred's boss (and Cleo's lover) murdered Hauff when he refused to leave the village. Cleo and several other people saw the killing. Hauff returns from the dead, and with the help of medieval plague victims, carries out a gruesome revenge on those responsible for his death.

I'm afraid gore fans might find this film rough going for there is very little blood here. But if you can ignore the rather bland script, then TEROR CREATURES.. has several striking scenes and one or two effective bits of gross to offer. One standout scene has the tombs of the plague victims slowly opening. Another has a case of mummified hands moving about. I watched this film at night during a windy rainstorm and those scenes had me checking out the ceiling. Walter Bredt (spelled Bredt in the credits) must have been a popular horror star in Italy during the sixties, as he appeared in quite a few films (PLAYGIRLS AND THE VAMPIRE, VAMPIRE AND THE BALLEMINA, SLAUGHTER OF THE VAMPIRES, and BLOODY PIT OF HORROR). Compared to other films he has appeared in, Barbara Steele doesn't have a lot of scenes, but she makes good use of her limited screen time here. By all means a flawless film, TEROR CREATURES FROM THE GRAVE is still worth a look.

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THE DEVIL'S COMMANDMENT (aka I VAMPIRE!) (1936)
SINISTER CINEMA REVIEWED BY DENNIS LOCANTORE

After many years of reading about Riccardo Fréde's first horror film, "I Vampire" (A.K.A. "The Devil's Commandment") we still have to catch up with an ancient print. What we have been able to see is the American re-release version which is considerably shorter (72 minutes as opposed to 88 minutes) than the original length. From this print it is impossible to discern just so much why the film has the amazing reputation it maintains among critics of horror films, but why anyone would think the film is anything but a pretty bad horror flick?

Sloppy editing, dubbing, a Monogram Pictures style music-score that destroys the bleak romanticism achieved via Fréde's remote visual intensity in some of the shots, really poor acting, tourist-beer style shots, and a perfunctory script seem to sabotage what titling good there is in this film.

The plot is essentially an updating of the Elizabeth Bathory legend to include a mad scientist/doctor who does the name-guessing for his beloved Buckner (Glenn Marie Connell). The only seeming interest due to some striking B&W cinematography by Mario Sava (which is also extremely uneven) and some rather daring (for the time) semi-nudity in a couple of scenes. As is fairly typical of this precursor of the "giallo" films the possible mystery angle (which is not kept much of a mystery) in the police investigation scene is handled in such a slipshod, perfunctory manner that one's interest is defeated between scenes involving the Buckner, the mad doctor and any of the murders. Even though the film is out, there is (believe it or not) too much filler material during which you'll have no extremely difficult time justifying your viewing.

I would very much in concur with the esteem heaped upon this movie in Phil Hardy's amazing "Encyclopedia of Horror Films", but also minus the missing 16 minutes is truly astounding. I cannot recommend, even mildly this film. If you must see a good Fréde film, then see his better known (and better) "The Horrible Dr. Hichcock". If you want to see a near-masterpiece from Fréde then I wholeheartedly recommend that you catch "The Ghost" (A.K.A. "Le Spectre"). Though I may be in the minority, I find the latter film much more impressive than it's better known and national production.